

GOVERNOR'S P-20 COUNCIL
Adolescent Literacy Committee
January 30, 2006
10:30 a.m.
Committee Minutes

Location: 1700 W. Washington, Arizona Department of Commerce, 6th Floor
Conference Room A, Phoenix, AZ 85007

P-20 Members Present: Chair Kristen Rex, Cindy Rudrud, Cathleen Barton, Dr. David Curd, and Dr. Jim Zaharis

Others: Michael Curd, Marie Mancuso, Michael Curd, Barbara Day, Chuck Jirauch

Staff: Debra Raeder, Becky Hill and Darcy Renfro

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Kristen Rex called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited those present to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 13, 2005

There being no discussion on or corrections to the Committee minutes of September 13, 2005, Cindy Rudrud moved approval of the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by David Curd and unanimously approved.

3. Update – Alignment Report

Debra Raeder provided an update to the Committee on the Alignment Project Report. The Alignment Project Committee has received an overview of the Report and will receive a draft copy of the Report on Friday, January 27, 2006. The Committee will provide comment to Public Works on or before February 2, 2006. The final report will be presented to the P-20 Council at the February 16, 2006 meeting.

The emphasis of the report was to look at five major industries that have been targeted in Arizona where job growth or development will be occurring, and identify occupations within these industries that meet a defined high-wage, high-demand/high-growth standard and then to identify specific skills, education and training needed for these occupations. This information was then validated with industry focus groups. In tandem with this work, Public Works did an analysis on the preparedness of Arizona's high school students for postsecondary study and the workplace focusing on the adequacy of academic preparation and articulation with requirements for post secondary study. The major findings of the Report are that Arizona's secondary system is not well aligned with the requirement for post-secondary study and the workplace, and that Arizona high

school academic and graduation requirements are not sufficient to equip all students with the necessary skills and knowledge for success.

4. Review & Discussion – Adolescent Literacy Report

Becky Hill indicated that the charge for the Committee is to examine the Report provided by the Alliance and begin the process of preparing an action plan for Arizona regarding Adolescent Literacy.

Marie Mancuso addressed the Committee on some concern the Department of Education (ADE) had regarding the Report and distributed a written synopsis of these concerns. In particular, ADE's concerns are as follows:

- That the Report reflects that AZ READS is a K-3 initiative only. Marie indicated that this program was launched in 2002 to be a comprehensive literacy initiative, inclusive of pre-school, K-12 and Special Education.
- Statements in the report that Arizona students in grades 4-12 have no provision for an appropriate intervention program if testing below grade level in reading. Marie indicated that A.R.S. 15-704 addresses this issue and that “interventions must be provided until the child meets the standard as measured by annual AIMS testing applies to students in grade 4-12”.
- That there is State Board policy defining valid and reliable screening, diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments that is relevant to grades 4-12.

Marie felt that these points, and others identified in the memo, were inaccuracies and omissions in the Report.

The members of the Committee, however, concurred with the findings in the Report and indicated to Marie that while the points she makes may indeed be accurate also, what is occurring “in the field” is the reality of the situation and that is what was reported by the Alliance. The Committee discussed that having State Board Requirements and laws in place already are effective tools for the Committee in developing the state’s strategic plan for adolescent literacy. The clarification by Ms. Mancuso was appreciated in dealing with the Alliance’s report and developing a big picture of adolescent literacy in Arizona.

Marie stated that ADE also has a Literacy Endorsement Committee and she will present the Adolescent Literacy Report to them for their review and consideration.

Other issues discussed by the Committee included concerns about charter schools receiving assessment information from transfer schools; the need for AIMS to be an on-demand test; and that there needs to be incentives and opportunities for teachers to take advantage of professional development in teaching literacy. Becky indicated that the Governor’s Committee on Teacher Quality and Support (TQS) is addressing the professional development piece.

5. Update – NGA Grant Application for Adolescent Literacy Strategic Plan

Debra Raeder indicated that she has written a grant to the NGA for funds in assisting the Committee as they work to draft a state adolescent literacy strategic plan. She should know whether the state has received the grant in early February.

6. Next Steps

The Committee requested the following next steps:

a. Meeting with Graduation Rate Project Committee;

As indicated in the report, a primary indicator of whether a student will graduate from high school is their ability to read. Some of the work the Adolescent Literacy Committee will be addressing will probably overlap with the work of the Graduation Rate Project Committee. It may be helpful for the Graduation Rate Project Committee to have a joint meeting with the Adolescent Literacy Committee to address issues and work that may overlap. Debra will send out a meeting matrix to ascertain a mutually convenient meeting time and date.

b. Other

1. Look at issues surrounding Professional Development:
 - That the TQS Committee be provided a copy of the Adolescent Literacy Report for review and consideration in their work on teacher professional development;
 - That the Writing Project be reviewed as a pilot training program for literacy coaches;
 - That improving adolescent literacy needs to be a two pronged approach: interventions for students and professional development for staff;
 - That a “CLE” type of program be considered as part of teacher certification renewal;
2. Look at issues surrounding costs – how do we assess costs?
 - That ADE consider a summer institute to address professional development time constraints facing teachers—what would the cost be;
 - That ADE provide the Committee with cost information for literacy coaches in middle schools and high schools;
3. Need input from other experts and professionals on developing an adolescent literacy strategic plan.
 - UCLA Institute on literacy
 - District Superintendents who employ literacy coaches
 - Human Resource Directors and business needs in literacy

- Look at Lexile – a system for coding levels of reading in “daily life” to school curriculums – Peoria School District has a model school that can access this information for Arizona
- Look at International Standards – David Curd to provide Information

The Committee requested that Marie ask the Literacy Endorsement Committee for a briefing at our next meeting.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 11:51 a.m.